



# ARCH Support

**Getting Over the Hump**

**Getting Through a Slump**

**Flattening the Curve**

*Wednesday's Tip Sheet: Steps pros took to get through a challenging time in life.*

**FEATURED PRO:** *Walt Boyer, Music & Events Consultant – Music Teacher (ret.)*

**TELL US ABOUT A CHALLENGING PROJECT OR DIFFICULT TIME IN YOUR LIFE:**

Two years into my job as an elementary school music teacher, I had a secure income with benefits. But I had always wanted a career as a performer. Teaching was a fall back plan. On a whim, I auditioned at The Skylight Opera (now Skylight Music Theatre).

It was a fantastic, earth shattering success!

A fat legal contract for a lead position in the next season's productions arrived in the mail. I negotiated with the school to finish the year followed by an unprecedented 6-12 month leave of absence from teaching – all to pursue a dream. This began a frenetic schedule of teaching by day, rehearsing by night (in advance of the theatre's show season) and performing in the first show: The Mikado.

The challenge: I developed a serious sinus infection impacting my vocal performance. The Skylight was very kind, but my voice was not sounding like it had during auditions. I had to re-audition. I went to their specialist for a diagnosis to the problem.

Devastation – I was diagnosed with career-threatening polyps. In a snap, it was all gone.

The treatment was painful. At the first surgery follow-up, the physician inserted a probe in my nasal cavity and accidentally nicked the incisions resulting in a bloody mess. This just before a badly needed spring vacation.

*(How did Walt get through it? Keep reading, next page.)*

## HOW DID YOU GET THROUGH IT?

Immediate response: Furious anger and tears at the possibility I would never sing again. Then, humility in action...I had to go back to the district and ask NOT to have leave of absence!

Long term: Prayer, perseverance and a partner in life who walked with me through it in faith.

In hindsight: Continuing full-time in a performing career would have meant a life of working gig-to-gig, paying my own benefits and travel costs: NOT a glamorous life. I would have lost the entire economic underpinning of my life.

*Yet I still "got glamour."* This includes solo performances in the Professional Corps of the MSO Chorus, working with Doc Severinsen, having an MSO conductor transfer his children from a top private school to my elementary school just so they could learn from me, being awarded Milwaukee's Outstanding Elementary Music Teacher, and mentoring other award-winning teachers and performers (some now on Broadway and film).



### KEY TAKEAWAY:

Getting through big life challenges takes GRIT: "The sustained application of effort towards a long term goal is the biggest predictor of lifelong achievement."\* The formula?

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Talent} + \text{Effort} &= \text{Skill} \\ \text{Skill} + \text{Effort} &= \text{Achievement} \end{aligned}$$

*Effort* is twice the power of Talent and Skill in the formula for GRIT.

\*GRIT. The Power of Passion and Perseverance, Duckworth, Angela; Scribner 2016

**FAVORITE QUOTE:** *"Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know."*

[Jeremiah 33:3 NIV Bible Translation]